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(WASHINGTON) - Today, Congressman Russ Carnahan (MO-3) voted to support our troops by providing them with the weapons and equipment they need and keeping the promises made to them and their families. The Defense Appropriations Act makes critical investments in the health, well-being and readiness of the armed forces.

**"This bill is about keeping a promise to our troops and putting their needs first,"** said Congressman Carnahan.

**"We made a commitment to give them and their families the best possible care for their service to our country."**

The Defense Appropriations Act keeps our commitments to our troops and their families by including a 3.4 % pay raise for the military. It also continues efforts to end the practice of "stop loss" and pays our troops an additional \$500 for every month their term of service is involuntarily extended by that practice.

The Appropriations Act includes a \$6 million request led by Congressman Carnahan to research accounts of the increased risks among many U.S. veterans developing multiple sclerosis. Congressman Carnahan has been a tireless advocate for MS funding at the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Program (CDMRP) because he believes that the Department of Defense has an obligation to fund this research after preliminary evidence suggests that Gulf War veterans have an increase risk of developing MS. Carnahan is the founder and co-chair of the Congressional MS Caucus.

**"It's absolutely crucial that our troops are prepared for battle with the best possible equipment, from body armor to vehicles,"** said Carnahan. **"This bill gives our soldiers the weapons they need to fight the wars of today and prepare for the battles of tomorrow."**

To protect troops on the battlefield and make sure that soldiers are well-prepared for any challenge that comes their way, this legislation provides them with first-class equipment. The Appropriation Act includes 22 EA-18G Growlers at the request of Congressman Carnahan. The Growler is the Navy's next generation Airborne Electronic Attack aircraft, that will begin

replacing the over 30 year-old EA-6B Prowler. It will provide advanced radar and communications support jamming and time critical targeting and strike capabilities for the Navy's aircraft carrier fleet.

To address the Navy's fighter aircraft shortfall needs the Act includes 18 additional FA-18E/F Super Hornets. The Super Hornet is the next generation strike fighter and the aviation backbone of the Navy's aircraft carriers that has serves as a model of delivering aircraft on time and on budget.

The Act also provides for three C-17A Globemaster III at a cost of \$674 million. The C-17 is the world's most effective and flexible strategic/tactical airlifter. The C-17 has revolutionized the movement of troops and equipment into battle by allowing their delivery to parts of the world that were previously not accessible by conventional airlifters.

More than two billion dollars is directed toward the development of the restructured Future Combat Systems Program. Boeing Integrated Defense Systems acts as lead systems integrator for the development of the next-generation of manned and unmanned capabilities.

**"The hardworking men and women of Boeing's Integrated Defense Systems are leading the way in providing quality equipment to our brave soldiers,"** said Congressman Carnahan.

**"Throughout the appropriations process we've been cutting programs that don't work, and investing responsibly in key priorities that will protect our country and grow our economy."**

This legislation makes a commitment to fiscal responsibility by reigning in outsourcing and putting Defense personnel, not contractors, in charge of critical department functions. At the same time, it will allow the Inspector General to hire additional investigators to ensure proper oversight of Department of Defense acquisition and contracting. For the first time since the beginning of operations in Iraq, this bill also budgets for Overseas Deployment and other activities in Iraq and Afghanistan for the upcoming fiscal year.

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